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EPA Accuses Uranium Mine Of Polluting Creek in Utah

The owners of a southern Utah uranium mine have been charged with violating the Clean Water Act by repeatedly discharging mine waste containing excessive amounts of radium and other pollutants into the Kane Canyon Creek.

Atlas Corp., which operates a uranium mine in San Juan County, is charged in a civil suit filed on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency with persistently exceeding its "daily maximum effluent limit."

The suit, filed Thursday in U.S. District Court for Utah, asks for an injunction preventing Atlas from continuing to discharge impermissible levels of pollutants.

Justice Department attorneys also ask the court to order Atlas to develop and implement a program to ensure the excessive discharges don't continue, and to assess a \$10,000 fine for each day the mine is in violation of its permit.

According to the suit, Atlas' Velvet Mine is allowed under an EPA permit to discharge certain amounts of the pollutants. But from January 1984 to March 1985 Atlas repeatedly exceeded its limits under the permit without notifying the EPA.

The discharge contained soluble radium-226, total radium-226 and suspended solids, according to the suit.

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